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change forms, in fact, the theme of the first essay in the volume, and the reasons which induced Mr. Boyd to accept a new field of ministerial usefulness are there set forth in some of his best pages. The paper is marked by wise thought expressed in simple and graceful language, and is quite worthy of the place which it holds at the very commencement of the new series. Among the best of the essays are those entitled "Concerning Summer Days," "Concerning Solitary Days," "Concerning Glasgow down the Water," and "Concerning the Pulpit in Scotland." Several of the other essays are also deserving of high commendation, and in some of them there are passages quite equal, if not superior, to anything in the papers which we have enumerated.

Mr. Boyd is not an original nor a very profound writer. He seldom adduces new arguments, and seldom places a subject in a new light. But we know no writer who can state a simple truth with more clearness and elegance, or illustrate it with more felicity of expression, or with a more just view of its various relations. If the range of his powers is not great, he thoroughly understands the measure of his own abilities, and never attempts anything which he cannot accomplish. His chief defect as an essayist is his discursiveness. This, however, is not apparent in all his essays; and in the best of them he never loses sight of his main purpose.

9. — *Index to the Catalogue of Books in the Upper Hall of the Public Library of the City of Boston.* Boston: George C. Rand and Avery, Printers to the City. 1861. Royal 8vo. pp. viii. and 902.

THE rapid growth of the Public Library of this city, and the large measure of success which has hitherto attended its operations, afford new and striking evidence of the high estimation in which literary culture is held in our community. Though the institution is not yet ten years old, it is already one of the largest in the United States, and no similar collection of books has ever been made accessible to so many persons, both for consultation within the library building, and for use at home. We gladly avail ourselves, therefore, of the opportunity presented by the publication of the volume named above, to lay before our readers a brief account of its history and present condition. For the materials of this sketch we are mainly indebted to the Annual Reports of the Trustees, and other printed documents.

The first efficient steps toward the formation of a free library in this city appear to have been taken in the latter part of 1847, when both branches of the city government voted unanimously, "That the City of

Boston will accept any donations from citizens or others for the purpose of commencing a Public City Library"; and, "That whenever the library shall be of the value of thirty thousand dollars, it will be expedient for the city to provide a suitable place and arrangements to enable it to be used by the citizens with as great a degree of freedom as the security of the property will permit." Two years afterward, Mr. Everett tendered to the city government in aid of this design his collection of state papers and Congressional documents, numbering more than one thousand volumes, and forming a large part of the splendid collection of public documents now in the library. His example was followed by others, and early in 1852 a Librarian was appointed, and a Board of Trustees was organized for the general management of the library, consisting of five citizens chosen at large, one Alderman, and one member of the Common Council. In October of the same year, Mr. Joshua Bates, a native of this city, then resident in London, intimated his intention of contributing the sum of fifty thousand dollars in aid of the proposed institution. This intention Mr. Bates has since fulfilled, and he has also given to the library a very large collection of books of permanent interest and worth. Early in 1853 a further sum of ten thousand dollars was given by the late Mr. Jonathan Phillips, who also made a testamentary bequest of twenty thousand dollars, applicable to the same object. To the munificent donations of these gentlemen the library is greatly indebted for its present prosperity. Large sums of money or valuable presents of books have also been received from Mr. Samuel Appleton, Mr. Abbott Lawrence, both of whom died while the library was still in its infancy; Mr. John P. Bigelow, formerly Mayor of the city; Mr. George Ticknor, who, in addition to his important services as a member of the Board of Trustees from their first appointment, has given nearly three thousand volumes; Mrs. S. I. K. Shepard; and from other persons. Among the most valuable of these acquisitions are the scientific library of the late Dr. Bowditch, comprising nearly two thousand five hundred volumes, given by his sons to be used only within the building, and the library of the late Rev. Theodore Parker, numbering about eleven thousand volumes.

The reading-room connected with the institution was first opened for public use on the 20th of March, 1854, in the basement story of the school-house on Mason Street, which had been selected as a place of temporary deposit for the books already received, and their circulation for home reading began a few weeks later. Meanwhile active measures were taken for procuring a suitable piece of ground for the erection of a library building, and on the 17th of September, 1855, just two hundred and twenty-five years after the settlement of Boston, the

corner-stone of the spacious edifice on Boylston Street was laid, with appropriate ceremonies. This building was completed and dedicated on the 1st of January, 1858. It is divided into two departments, known as the Upper Hall and the Lower Hall, and it cost, together with the land, a little more than three hundred and sixty thousand dollars. The Lower Hall contains the books which it was supposed would be most frequently asked for, and was opened for general use in the autumn of 1858, at which time an "Index to the Catalogue" was published. This department contains at the present time about nineteen thousand volumes, and by the last Annual Report of the Superintendent it appears that the whole number of persons who had registered their names for the purpose of securing the privileges of the library was upward of eighteen thousand, or more than one tenth of the whole population of the city, and that the average daily circulation of books in 1860 was a little more than five hundred volumes. The books in the Upper Hall are divided into three classes, comprising, respectively, those which were given to the library on the express condition that they shall not be removed from the building, those which can be taken out only on special permission, and those which are intended for general circulation, but which it was supposed would not be so frequently asked for as the books in the Lower Hall. The "Index" to this department contains the titles of about fifty-five thousand volumes, and there are about nineteen thousand volumes, including Mr. Parker's library, which are not yet catalogued. The whole number of books, therefore, in both departments, is about ninety-three thousand volumes.

An examination of the "Index" now before us, and of the smaller one issued in 1858, shows how judiciously the Trustees have discharged their duties, both in regard to the selection of books and to the establishment of the necessary rules and regulations. We have rarely, if ever, had occasion to examine a large collection of books which contains so few that are of little or no value to any one, or which as a whole is so well adapted to the use for which it is intended. It is especially rich in the departments most likely to be of practical use in a community like ours, such as history, political economy, the natural and exact sciences, and the mechanic arts. It is also well furnished in modern French, Italian, and German literature, in works on music, and in books of travel. In the divisions of English and American history, both general and local, it is remarkably full, comprising, for instance, about seventy histories of towns in this Commonwealth, and at least one history of every county in England, beside a complete collection of Congressional documents and of the Sessional Papers of the British Parliament. It also contains most of the publications of the various

learned societies in Great Britain and France, as well as the great French and Italian historical and scientific collections. Another important series is that of Specifications of Patents, presented by the British government, and now numbering about seven hundred volumes, conveniently arranged for reference in a room exclusively appropriated to them.

In the preparation of this "Index," and also of the smaller one of 1858, the efforts of the Trustees have been efficiently seconded by the accomplished Superintendent of the library, Mr. Charles C. Jewett, and by the various assistants employed on the work. In simplicity and convenience of arrangement it leaves nothing to be desired, while the thorough bibliographical knowledge displayed in it doubles its usefulness. We have never, indeed, seen a catalogue better adapted for popular use, and we cannot but congratulate the Trustees on their wise decision in adopting the plan on which it is based at the very outset of their labors. It is strictly alphabetical in arrangement,—the full titles of the books being placed under the names of their authors, while the titles in an abbreviated form are also placed under their respective subjects. When the name of the author is not known, the book is registered under one or more of the principal words in the title. The usefulness of the "Index" is also much increased by the insertion of a brief summary of the contents of every work of more than one volume which treats of numerous topics, or which includes distinct productions, and also by the careful separation of the works of different authors of the same name. Complete alphabetical lists of the documents published by order of Congress, and of the Sessional Papers of the British Parliament, are also given. These lists fill more than forty pages, closely printed in double columns, and render the examination of the collection, thus catalogued for the first time, easy and convenient. Every student of history who has ever had occasion to consult any of these documents will readily appreciate the amount of care and labor necessary in the preparation of two such catalogues, and will feel grateful for the labor bestowed on them.

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10. — *Poems on Various Subjects, but chiefly Illustrative of the Events and Actors in the American War of Independence.* By PHILIP FRENEAU. Reprinted from the rare Edition printed at Philadelphia in 1786. With a Preface. London: John Russell Smith. 1861. 16mo. pp. xxii. and 362.

AMONG the poets of the Revolution who contributed most effectually to animate the Colonists in their struggle with England, Philip Freneau